The Groom from hell

The night was gloomy and drizzly, with streaks of lightning skittering across the sky, followed by the mighty bellow of thunderclaps. The lightning revealed the silhouette of the cathedral as it streaked across as if taking a picture. In its courtyard, a man in a black cassock stood with his elbows on the balcony, listening to the pouring rain. He frantically checked his pocket watch before gliding it into his pouch. The door opened behind him, allowing the rays of golden light to blotch his black dress with elegant patterns of light. A golden face appeared behind the door. The hair was golden just like its face. “Come in, Father,” it said in the meekest voice possible. He stepped into the room. He felt the room’s warmth receive him with open hands. He looked over at the woman. Her face, which was Golden now, turned radiant brown, her pale blue frock fitted perfectly on her melanated skin, she looked at him keenly, her brown eyes searching for clues about him. He was tall with broad shoulders, a patched beard, and a sunken young face, it seemed like he had seen hell nine times. He reminded her of her brother she'd always wanted to see after being taken from that damn farmhouse, she smiled slightly, trying to welcome the guest. “The bishop will see you in the next five minutes sir” She picked up the mop sitting at the corner of the room, adjusted the hem of her dress, and walked towards the door, She turned abruptly “If you need anything Reverend…..” He raised his left hand, signifying her to leave.

He slumped on the well-laid bed groaning in satisfaction as he felt the soft fabric brush against his body. He closed his eyes taking a short prayer

“Lord please let me rest, just this once, please” he lay there thinking about what brought him here, The last reverend here had a weird horrifying exit from this world as he was reportedly

eaten by a demon, only his lower body and spilt guts were recovered, The Reverend before the previous wasn't even found… He wondered what was going on in hell that made it much hotter.

Bbbrraanngg!! The telephone disrupted him from going into the dreamland. “Shit!, what the actual Fu…..bbbrranng!!! It rang again, he picked up the receiver holding the cold plastic object close to his ear, and he waited, listening. Static, just static…..suddenly a woman's voice could be heard from the other end, “Is this the cathedral”? She asked, her voice shaky and concerned.

“Yes” he replied

“It's her again! She is doing it again….” A loud shriek could be heard at the other end

“Uhh…what?”

“She is convulsing…come here, please!”

“Call the hospital,” he replied sharply and proceeded to hang up the phone

“Please, you don't understand, she needs an exorcism”, she replied. The screeching could still be heard

His face lit up with interest

“Where?” he asked

“54 Canal Street”

“On my way!”

He arrived at Canal Street, and it was eerily silent, no sight of humans or their little pests. Finding the 54th house wasn't so hard, as it was just a small local church with a little cabin. He knocked gently, his dark fingers hitting the wooden door, and the door opened slightly. “Nice, no one is home,” he thought to himself. The interior was much nicer than the exterior. The room was filled with luxury, and it made him wonder if this was a parish or a hotel. A

woman appeared in the small hallway, her hands clasped together, and in her hand was a small whip dripping blood. “Here! Father, hurry” she said as she ushered him to a large chamber. The Reverend paused, confused as the house looked small on the outside and larger on the inside. He knew he ought to be surprised by the whip but this wasn't the first time he had seen crazy significations from the church itself. He lifted his hands as if to say something… “Please Hurry!” the woman whispered. They entered a room that was more sumptuous than what he had seen. A woman was bound unto the bed, her pale white skin littered with scars and fresh wounds, her eyes were plain white, and she lay there still, semi-naked. He stepped forward stretching out his arms, and suddenly she began shaking and twitching, her bones snapping and cracking, She opened her mouth, words following out softly

“hicne es, ut me domum recipias, amor meus?”

(Are you here to take me home, my love?)

“amica mea”

(my love)

“Panduntur portae”

(The gates are open)

He turned towards the woman, her face twisted in horror, she dropped to her knees chanting

“Holy Mary, Mother of Christ…”

“Stop, leave us be!” he commanded.

“Go! Just go! He screamed at her, his eyes glaring

She stood up immediately, her hands trembling as she made her way toward the door.

As she stepped outside the room the door closed shut with a loud bang, She wondered why he was furious. She placed her ears close to the door trying to eavesdrop but she couldn't.

A loud bang was heard at the foyer, followed by two soft knocks, quiet but hasty. She rushed towards the door, her ponytail following her in consecutive bumps.

She opened the door, her face mixed with horror in the cold night, the moonlight casting a shadow on a portion of her face. Standing in her presence was the Reverend. “But, fa…ther!” she stammered.

“Hey! What is your name” he said waving his hand

“Martha”

“I understand there is a devil in here with my face, listen patiently and do as I say quickly, you understand?”

“Yes sir” she replied

He leaned towards her, his right foot on the threshold, and he whispered:

“Get the hell out of here”

He stepped into the building, the stench in the air almost blinding his sight.

“Jesus Christ,” he muttered to himself. The whole interior was in disarray, grime and dust filled everywhere, and the walls were stained with stale blood and vomit. He looked over at the small kitchen, the stone hearth and pans covered in grease. He kicked down the door to the room, his disgusted countenance turning into a grin. The woman was still in the room bound to the bed, the entity was nowhere to be found. The Reverend stood at the base of the bed directly above the woman. He looked around the room, trying to find what could have invited such a demon. Something bright caught the reverend’s eye, glittering as it reflected the moonlight’s aura. The reverend knew immediately what type of demon it was, the shimmering object is usually used by these sons-of-bitches to travel in-between realms, sitting on the wall at the other end of the room was a seven-foot tall old mirror, its reflected light giving the room a darker aesthetics. “That is the door,” he thought to himself.

“I know you are in there, come outside and face me you son of a bitch!” The Reverend said aloud. Total silence followed, he looked over at the woman, her chest heaving heavily, her eyes as white as snow. Although he had seen worse than this still he felt a surge of concern. "In the name of Jesus Christ, I command you, depart from this woman and return to the abyss!"

Suddenly, she screamed as a dark mist surged out of her mouth, nostrils, and ears. The dark mist surrounded the room, consolidating into the form of a man, a man with the Reverend’s face. “Be warned Thomas, don't you dare mention that name, for it is not my time for the abyss!” it responded. The Reverend was taken aback by the mention of his name.

“You know my name?” he asked

“Yes I do and those before you”

“What's yours?” he asked

“A blatant effort to bait me” it chuckled

“You dare to use my face!” Thomas confronted

“Well, it is an honour Reverend, Your's is pretty scarce in hell”

“Why do you possess this woman, why do you make her suffer,” Thomas asked, pointing toward her

“What woman? That's my fiance, we are getting married before the sun comes up”

“Well, I hate to be an intruder but this wedding isn't happening”

“What's your business, why do you hate us so much, didn't Christ love the church, as he did love you?”

“Us?” Thomas questioned, with a smirk on his face

“Enough! She is mine, I won't let you take her from me” it proclaimed angrily.

“We'll see about that” he replied as he pulled out a small pocket knife, he moved towards the woman

“Wh….what are you doing!? the demon asked furiously as it seemed impatient.

The Reverend ignored the question and proceeded to drive the knife gently into her left wrist drawing a sparse amount of blood.

The devil screamed, clutching its left wrist

“Quit overreacting imp! You are both connected”

“Leave her alone!” the devil screamed as it rushed towards him in a frenzy, hitting the Reverend with a punch on his right shoulder. The force sent him across the room like paper, the wall behind him received the impact,

“Nice! A fight, just what I wanted” he groaned as he stood up, his shoulder was dislocated and blood ran down his nose, he held his shoulder with his right hand and pulled it back into place as if nothing happened.

“My turn,” he said.

He closed his eyes and clasped his palms, producing a loud clap.

“Illumini!” he yelled

Suddenly the roof of the room caved in followed by a stream of blue lightning, It struck the demon as it writhed in pain.

The light slowly died down, revealing a lump of burnt flesh and bones.

The Reverend sighed as he walked towards the woman, he looked at her. Her eyes slowly returned, and her pale skin slowly healed.

“It's ok, it's all over now”, he whispered, unbinding her left hand. He pulled her up slowl,y watching her feeble veins twitching.

“No, it's not” a thick masculine voice emanated from her. Thomas watched in horror as her eyes rolled back in, her wounds reigniting, forming red-amber edifices. Thomas realised he made a mistake, he had unbound her.

“Now I'll never leave this body,” it said, chuckling

“You son of a….”

“Quiet! Such profanity and you call yourself a man of God” It interrupted

“The way I speak is none of your business!”

“Then my wedding isn’t yours,” the woman possessed by the demon said as she flung herself towards him, her eagle-like fingernails dug right into his cassock ripping a fraction from his chest.

He felt a sharp pain across his chest, he looked down trying to process what just happened. Blood began dripping down his chest turning the edges of the torn area burgundy.

The reverend dropped weakly to his knees, his chest heaving heavily, he hadn't seen something like this in a while. The possessed woman launched a second foray, clawing her talons in his face and leaving a bright four-lined red gash across his face, almost taking his left eye. He fell backwards, his head hitting the ground, he could see his blood splashed across the wall behind him.

“This can't be happening, am I dying? " he asked himself as he closed his eyes.

“Not really” a gentle voice replied

He woke up panting, his heart racing everywhere was dark. He tried lifting his legs but he couldn’t. He could smell wet earth around him.

“Oh, Christ! I’m dead and in a coffin” he whispered

Suddenly, he could hear the faint sound of a shovel hitting the ground, The sound rose to a crescendo and finally to a halt as the shovel hit the crown of the coffin.

It opened revealing a young man with golden hair clothed in white, he offered Thomas his hand trying to pull him up, Thomas felt the dirt in his shoes sting his feet, as the young man pulled him out of the coffin. He looked around him, trying to grasp where he was.

It was a garden of some sort, with short golden fences and strange plants; he could see a small golden cottage on a hill far away, with smoke coming out of its chimney.

“Where am I?”

“Where are we?”

“What is this place?” Thomas asked.

“Too many questions Thomas,” The young man said amidst his chuckles

“Welcome to Eirinis, the home of peace” he replied

“I’m dead?”

“Nah, you are just between worlds,” the golden-haired young man replied. Thomas heard a subtle spinning sound beneath his cassock, he reached for it, pulled it out, and behold, it was his pocket watch, its hands spinning like crazy.

“Don’t worry Thomas, you are still lying down in the room.

“Why am I here?” He asked.

“Well you died except, you just stood on the bridge to the other side, This is the bridge, Thomas.”

“That filthy thing attacked me!” Thomas proclaimed

“Woah, language” the man cautioned

“Nah!, it tried to kill me. I'm going back to kick his ass!”

“Hmm” the golden-haired man gave out a sigh

“You still haven't learned your lesson”

“What lesson dude,” Thomas asked

“Look!” the man pointed to his cassock, the ripped-out area formed a frame around the scarred wound, “You're still young, a child fiddling with the paws of hell expecting no repercussions, I was once in your shoes meddling with the affairs of the devil and when the devil fought back, I had to make an exchange, a difficult one.”

“What exchange,” Thomas asked

“There’s no time, when you get there you will understand. Listen carefully Thomas, to defeat that demon you must identify its weakness. Remember, there is no weapon as powerful as wisdom, for it can conquer even the fiercest demons.” The man suddenly stopped his eyes fixed on the east towards the golden cottage

“You have to go now”

“How? Why?”

He looked at Thomas with blue blazing eyes

“Go!” he ordered

Thomas felt his heart skip as he began to feel dreamy, he looked at his hands and noticed them fading

He closed his eyes, the warm fuzzy feeling engulfing him.

Thomas was back in the room, the woman was still there clenched together at the edge of the bed, her arms around her knees, head bowed like In a foetal position.

Thomas got up slowly, fumbling his cassock for his pocket watch, he glanced at it trying to consult the old silvery piece of time, fifteen minutes past two a.m. it read.

He walked towards her in quick decisive steps, his Black Oxford shoes hitting the wooden floor. The woman looked at him and smiled cunningly,

“This is the last warning Thomas, Leave us alone so you may be on your way in peace” she warned, two voices overlapping hers and that of the demon.

“No demon! You have crossed the line, having court a woman of this realm You broken the seventh ordinance you've forceful…..” he was interrupted by the demon’s chuckle

“The last time I checked, we don’t obey rules anymore. The gates are wide open Thomas, I will say this for the last time, leave us alone so you may go unscathed. No one will know you ran like a coward, like a dog with its tail in between its legs” She laughed again but this time the demon’s outburst was stronger.

Thomas closed his eyes heaving a big sigh

“No! I will not” he proclaimed

“Well as you wish”

Thomas felt a sting at his feet. He checked his feet warily enough to notice the pentagram beneath his shoes.

Before he could utter a word he felt a woosh as a bright light blinded his eyes.

He opened his eyes to a vast desert with scorching howling winds.

“I did warn you, but you were stubborn!”

Thomas paced around the sands, agitated.

He turned around dreadfully searching for the voice That conversed with him.

“Where are you!?, show yourself! he called out, the howling wind hitting his face, whipping it with sand.

This is a difficult one, he thought to himself.

The wind again blew the sand across his face forming a dust storm and revealing a man also in a black cassock with the Reverend's face.

“Your God has no power here, this is my realm, my domain!” the devil challenged him.

“No, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." the Reverend replied

“Yes! I know, I was there when it was written”

It fired back.

…….For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." He replied trying to catch his breath

With a sinister glance, the demon extended its right hand, harnessing the ethereal power of the desert sand to effortlessly suspend the hapless reverend in mid-air.

“Where is your God now!?, it screamed at him

“Why won't he come to save you?”

It dropped him in an instant, watching him fall to the ground.

Thomas felt a horrible troubling sensation in his throat, he felt weak in the knees as he fell to the ground.

The actions of the demon infuriated Thomas as he didn't like being violated by some hubris that came from hell

He turned his face upward staring at the desert sun when he began noticing something strange.

Suddenly, he discovered that despite the severe heat he wasn't sweating. Thomas could see something glittering in the distance, beckoning his senses to acknowledge its existence. It was the mirror, in its reflection was the moon clear in the sky. At this moment the Reverend realised he never left the room, it was all an illusion. A name came to his mind, a demon known for being a master illusionist, “*bael coniugis”*.

The demon launched at him

“Bael!” The Reverend screamed at the demon with all the voice he could find

It froze mid-air, its dark claws dissolving into fingers.

“That's right, I know you, I know your name.”

“Impossible!” Bael screamed

“You see, the thing is you goons aren't that special, you ravage the world causing chaos only to end up in a place worse than death”

“You will be in hell with us Reverend, You can't escape the inevitable, we would whine and dine with him” it responded.

“Enough!,” Thomas ordered time to put your ass to sleep. He reached for his pocket and pulled out a small black book. He took a glance at it, closed his eyes and began to hum weird phrases.

“Ah! A man of the occult,” Bael added his lips twisting into a cunning smile

“Discede, discede in abyssum!.” Thomas yelled at the demon

A gust of wind picked up the demon, drawing it towards the mirror, it struggled drawing large and deep cuts on the desert sand as the gale pushed it into the mirror.

“Noooo!” it screeched as he disappeared into its vortex.

The illusion of the desert slowly dissipated revealing the room as it was before. The woman sat at the edge of the bed sweating profusely, the Reverend walked cautiously towards her his eyes fixated on the floorboard in the room

“Hello” he whispered gently

“Thank you, Reverend” she answered feebly

“Christ has saved you, go and sin no more” he added.

He looked around the room fascinated by the damage done by the demon

“Does the church have insurance?” he thought to himself.

He lay on his bed staring at the ceiling, its pattern reminding him of swirls on the shell of a sea snail bringing back his memories of college days as an aspiring biologist.

He sighed, his mind drifting away pondering on why he didn't follow the other path, the normal one, the one with absolute peace, with none of this hellish meddling. All he could think of was his wife Laura and their son James, how the devil took them from him. He placed both hands on his chest mimicking a sense of warmth as he drifted to sleep.

His eyes opened for a moment and in front of him was a seven-foot humanoid wearing a cassock exactly like his, he tried moving but he couldn't. It was as if the bed bound him. He tried screaming for help but he could not find his voice. He watched as the figure slowly drew closer from the dark corner of the room. The moonlight emanating from the window sills hit

its face revealing it to be a mass of flesh with no facial features. Thomas's heart pounded heavily, he could hear his heart valves slamming into each other. The figure extended his hands drawing out his soul towards it. Thomas could feel his life draining from him. Suddenly, he felt at peace, the floating feeling emanating from his legs. He looked back at his body, the tired piece of flesh, it was then he realised he looked much older than his age.

He watched in horror as the figure's head twitched and squelched its frontals, ripping off and showing menacing rows of fangs.

"Where is she? It growled

"How is this possible?", Thomas asked trembling

"I sent you to the chasm, I watched you get sucked in"

The figure stopped for a moment as if frozen in time. Thomas floated around it looking at its features. It seems to have a tail sticking out of the cassock, he drifted upwards trying to take an aerial view.

"Impressive", he remarked

He sailed to its face attempting to touch the mass of flesh of a head.

It snarled, startling the reverend.

"I have defeated you, I sent you into the abyss" he proclaimed

The entity picked him by the head, the rest of his floating body dangling like those of a rag doll, flung the reverend towards the wall of the room.

The reverend phased through the wall like a ghost, tumbling through was seemed like a dark tunnel, he could hear screams echoing through its walls. Thomas heard a series of sounds but one was peculiar. In the drowning screams of the tunnel walls, he heard sea waves crashing against cliff rocks. He appeared unto the gallery of a lighthouse facing the sea, he felt a hot sensation at his back, the revolving lantern whipping his back with bands of light. He felt a

tap on his shoulder. He turned around to face the same demon he had battled earlier, the one with his face.

“Oh f*uck”, he muttered.

© 2025 **Adeyemi Alhazzan Peter.** Fan art, illustrations, reviews, readings, and non-commercial adaptations are permitted with attribution.

Commercial adaptations, publications, films, games, and merchandise require written permission from the author.

adeyemialhazzan@gmail.com